



New Mineral Rights Board paves way for transparency in issuance of mining license

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"The key enabling regulations had to go through rigorous public participation sessions from stakeholders and Parliament," Mining Cabinet Secretary Dan Kazungu said/FILE

By **KENNEDY KANGETHE**, NAIROBI, Kenya, Jul 19 – Mining Cabinet Secretary Dan Kazungu, has inaugurated the Mineral Rights Board (MRB) paving the way for issuance of mining licenses as required under the Mining Act 2016.

The nine member board will be tasked with advising and giving recommendations to the cabinet secretary on granting, rejection, retention, renewal, suspension, revocation, variation, assignment, trading, tendering or transfer of mineral rights.



In addition, the MRB will have the power to declare certain minerals as strategic minerals and the cessation, suspension or curtailment of production in respect to mining licenses.

The new board will also determine fees, charges, and royalties payable for a mineral right or mineral as well as advice on areas suitable for small scale and artisanal mining among other duties.

The Cabinet Secretary expressed confidence in the Mineral Rights Board and assured them of his and the ministry's support in discharging their functions.

"The delay in inauguration of the Mineral rights Board was due to circumstances beyond our control. The

key enabling regulations had to go through rigorous public participation sessions from stakeholders and Parliament. Parliament only approved these regulations at the end of June before proceeding on recess," Kazungu said.

The appointed nine-member Mineral Rights Board team comprises of Chairperson appointed by the President Abel Chumba, Principal Secretary Ministry of Mining Ibrahim Mohamed, Principal Secretary National Treasury Kamau Thugge, Chairman National Land Commission Mohamed Swazuri, Director of Mines/Secretary to the Board Raymond Mutiso as well as Director of Geological Services Ministry of Mining Shadrack Kimomo.

Others include a representative from Council of Governors Wachira Maina, two persons appointed by the Cabinet Secretary with professional qualifications and experience Vivienne Apopo Yeda and Gathuru Mburu.

"Today's inauguration of the Mineral Rights Board is the epitome of our reform agenda for the Mining sector. This is something the Ministry has been looking forward to as Industry stakeholders have been impatiently waiting for this day to come to pass so that the piled up expired licenses and new applications can be considered in earnest by the Board," Kazungu said.

Having the Mineral Rights Board in place now repeals the old system where decisions on licensing were made by a single office and individual in the person of the Commissioner of Mines and Geology.

The MRB is set to provide more consultative processes of evaluation and consideration of concession and mineral rights applications as well as renewals that will ensure transparency and accountability in the management of the Mining Sector in Kenya.

This will, in turn, reduce the time taken to approve applications via the online cadaster.

The newly appointed Chairperson and members of the Mineral Rights Board shall hold office for a period of three years and may be eligible for re appointment for a further one term.

"Base Titanium welcomes the inauguration of the Mineral Rights Board, a key reform of the mining sector contained in the Mining Act 2016. We look forward to seeing prospecting and mining licenses being approved and having the sector make a greater contribution to Kenya's economic transformation in line with Cabinet Secretary Kazungu's goal of contributing 10 percent to GDP by 2030." Joe Schwarz General Manager External Affairs and Development told Capital FM Business.

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